JUST THE FACTS:
National Center for Geospatial Intelligence Standards

WHO?

The NCGIS is the National Center for Geospatial Intelligence Standards.

The mission of the NCGIS is to execute the responsibilities of the Director, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) as Functional Manager for geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) standards. The Center does this by setting, implementing, and being an advocate for GEOINT standards and standards management processes and policies that promote interoperability and operational efficiency across the National System for Geospatial-Intelligence (NSG) community.

WHAT?

The NCGIS manages the GEOINT Standards Program, which supports the requirements of the NSG community and the NSG enterprise-wide system architecture. The NCGIS addresses GEOINT standards relevant to enabling technologies, data architecture, and software tools.

GEOINT standards enable the discovery, access, integration and dissemination of GEOINT. Key standardization areas include:

- Imagery content and format;
- Geographic feature encoding;
- Geographic portrayal;
- GEOINT metadata;
- GEOINT reporting;
- Advanced Geospatial Intelligence (AGI);
- Information transfer.

WHEN?

The Director of NGA, retired Air Force Lt. Gen. James R. Clapper, Jr., authorized the establishment of the NCGIS on September 18, 2002 to support a standards-based approach to transformation of the NSG enterprise architecture and to meet NGA's responsibilities as Functional Manager for GEOINT standards. Creation of the NCGIS was a direct result of recommendations made by the February 2002 Standards Tiger Team, which was charged with determining a comprehensive strategy and approach to GEOINT standards management that could be effectively applied across NGA and the NSG community that it serves. A second Standards Tiger Team, with representation from NGA, other Department of Defense (DoD) organizations, the Intelligence Community (IC), and civil government and coalition partners, was created in February 2003 to develop a corporate strategy for the NCGIS. This NCGIS became operational on October 3, 2003.

WHERE?

The NCGIS implements a standards management policy within NGA to ensure a standards-based approach to achieving interoperability:

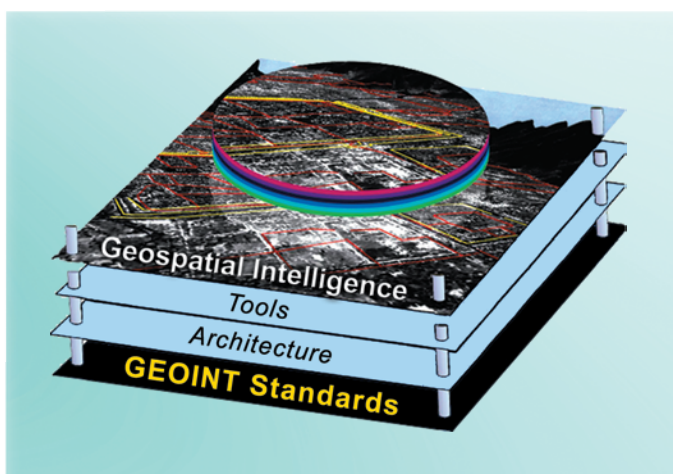*...enabling effective, timely, and affordable geospatial intelligence through*

STANDARDS

- Among all consumers of GEOINT data, including the military services and commands, coalition partners, the IC, and the civil community;
- Across the GEOINT enterprise to include NGA and its production partners;
- Throughout the myriad components of tools, equipment, training and people that constitute the NSG.

Standards -
Supporting Interoperability of GEOINT

HOW?

The NCGIS Standards Roadmap defines the processes, procedures, organizational relationships, governance mechanisms, and strategic direction the NCGIS will follow to sustain a viable GEOINT Standards Program.

In carrying out its leadership role in GEOINT standards, the NCGIS:

- Represents the DoD and the IC on all matters relating to GEOINT standards to industry and standards development bodies;

- Identifies and pursues standards that support data- and net- centric environments and enhance our ability to manage GEOINT;
- Continually assesses the viability of open commercial standards, measuring their return-on-investment at the enterprise level;
- Leverages acquisition investments and research and development initiatives to encourage industry to adopt standards that advance interoperability;
- Defines and promotes best practices in standards management;
- Establishes GEOINT standards guidance and policy.

WHY?

GEOINT standards enhance operational efficiency and improve productivity. By promoting common standards, especially standards-based commercial off-the-shelf (SCOTS) solutions, the NCGIS fosters:

- Improved interoperability of the NSG enterprise architecture;
- Extended interoperability gains to production partners and customers;
- Reduction in technology life cycle costs through reduction in custom solutions and their associated maintenance costs;
- Reduction in technology risk through the commercial development of new open interfaces consistent with NSG architecture needs.

STANDARDS
The Foundation for Interoperability